2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

285 352 with wefts 3 mm. wide. It had a border of black geometric designs and a wool fringe.

A kava mat (*yambe ni yanggona*) is slightly larger and coarser than a baby mat. It is unornamented.

An eating mat is long and narrow with coarse weave. One used in the high chief's household in Lakemba was about 28 meters long and 3 meters wide, with wefts 2 cm. wide. The edges were fringed with pandanus.

285 531 *Yambe volavola* are pandanus mats decorated with black geometric designs in twill or check weave made with wefts dyed black. The designs are placed across the entire surface of the mat in lengthwise or diagonal bands or lines, at the corners of the mat in triangles, or around the edge of the mat as a border (fig. 18). The designs are named. A zigzag line is called *wungga ni vasua* because it resembles the *vasua*, a shellfish. A border composed of short [386] parallel diagonal lines is called *somovuni*. The black dye (*soma*) is made of *sikethi* (p. 89).

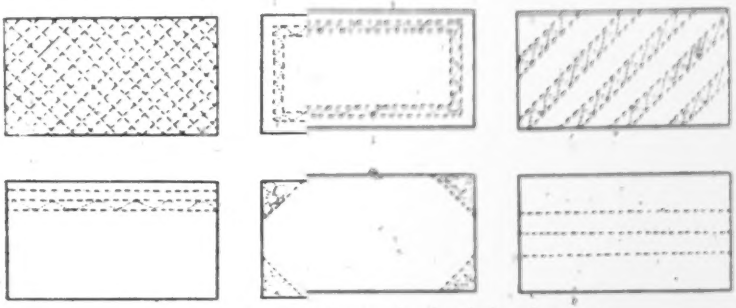

FIGURE 18.—Sketches of mats, showing design placement.

285 [854] According to aged informants, a very soft mat, called *latha*, was formerly used as a sling to carry infants on the back or the hip. The *latha* was of fine weave and about 2 meters long and 45 cm. wide.

[292] Another fine mat, the *tawala*, was formerly used as a dancing kilt. One corner of the mat was bent down and the mat was tied around the waist with a piece of barkcloth or sennit. Old mats worn by mourners are also called *tawala*.

[622] A very fine, white mat, called *tawake*, was tied to the mast of a chief's canoe as a flag or emblem of rank.

[237] Natives say that mat fringe, although called *kula* (red parakeet), was formerly made of rooster feathers or of the inner bark of the *sitchi* in southern Lau. The feathers from the red parakeet were used to fringe mats in the Moala group but not in southern Lau, according to informants.

10:St. Johnston G-5 (no date)1918
OQ6 Lau OQ6

in front of us, and then waited while the leading *matapuli* of the Nayau people came forward, and, sitting down, laid his hands on the nuts and made a little speech to us, asking that the great chief should excuse any faults he might see, and deal mercifully with the people and protect them as always. 123 574 431

Our *matapuli* then touched the offerings as usual, and spoke a few words in reply, saying that we accepted the offering and that we hoped the land would flourish and the people increase and prosper. This presentation of the nuts on their branch is always called *Ai Fono ni nona cudra*[1] or "the dam against his wrath"; in other words, a propitiatory gift.

The Nayau *matapuli* then came along, crouching, and bringing a number of ivory whales' teeth or *tabua*, heavy curved yellow tusks, each about nine inches long and supported from the two ends by a loop of dyed and twisted coco-nut fibre sinnet. These were offered with a few deprecatory sentences, speaking of "these insignificant teeth" in true Oriental style, though they are actually in this part of the Pacific the greatest gift it is possible to offer, and have an importance far above their intrinsic value. [In the old days the offer (and acceptance) of a *tabua* to a chief meant that any request accompanying it could [237] [435]

[1] "Bose" in Fijian.